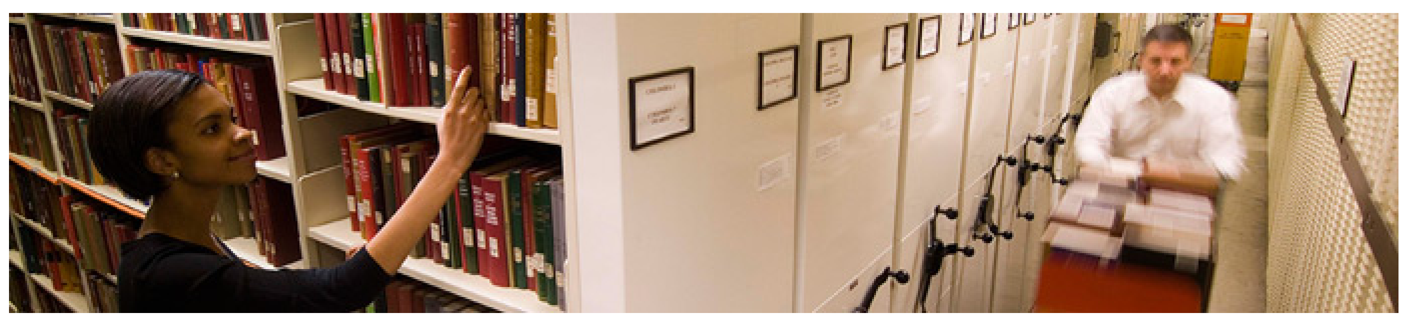
National Parliaments: France



Summary

France is a unitary republic with a bicameral legislature composed of the National Assembly and the Senate. The French constitutional system is often described as semipresidential, and is characterized by a structure of interconnecting powers between the legislative and executive branches. The checks and balances between the legislative and executive branches include the President's power to dissolve the National Assembly, and the National Assembly's power to dismiss the Prime Minister, shared authority to initiate legislation between the Parliament and the Prime Minister, and the absence of any veto power on the part of the President. The Parliament's powers are strictly enumerated by the Constitution, which lists the matters that can be the subject of legislation.

Members of the National Assembly are called deputies and are elected directly, in contrast with senators, who are chosen by indirect elections. Deputies are elected for five-year terms. Senators are elected for six-year terms, but elections are held every three years to elect an alternating half of the chamber. Both chambers are organized in a similar manner, with a chamber president, a governing bureau, commissions, and formal political groups. Bills are submitted either by the Prime Minister or by members of either chamber. Once submitted to one of the two chambers, a bill is first discussed, amended if need be, and voted on in commissions before being discussed, amended, and voted on by the chamber as a whole. The bill must then go to the other chamber, where it follows the same procedure: discussion, possible amendment, and vote in commission followed by discussion, possible amendment, and vote in the chamber's plenary session. A bill must be adopted by both chambers with identical language before it can be signed into law by the President of the Republic. If the two chambers disagree on the terms of the bill, a joint commission comprised of seven deputies and seven senators is tasked with finding a compromise draft, although that compromise draft must still be voted on by both chambers. In extreme cases of deadlock, the National Assembly may have the final say.

I. Background

The French Parliament was born in one of the opening acts of the French Revolution: on June 17, 1789, representatives of the Third Estate (i.e., commoners; the First Estate referred to the clergy and the Second Estate referred to the nobility) declared themselves to be the *Assemblée nationale* (National Assembly), and asserted themselves as the embodiment of national sovereignty and of the will of the French people.[1] The constitutional history of France was tumultuous, however, and the names and forms of the French legislature changed many times, especially during the century following the Revolution.[2] The French legislative branch ran the gamut from an elected unicameral body (as in the Constitution of 1791), to an appointed tetracameral body (under Napoleon Bonaparte).[3] It was not until the Third Republic, shaped by the Constitutional Laws of 1875, that the notion of a democratically-elected bicameral legislature finally took root in an enduring manner. From then on, with the tragic

exception of the Vichy Régime period (1940–1944), French legislative power always remained in the hands of an elected Parliament.[4]

The current constitutional system is known as the Fifth Republic, and is founded on the Constitution of October 4, 1958.[5] As described below, the Constitution gives crucial powers to Parliament, making it an institution of vital importance in modern French politics.

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II. Constitutional Status and Role

A. Type of System

France is a unitary republic. The Constitution officially describes it as an “indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic.”[6] The Fifth Republic is often considered to be a “semipresidential” regime.[7] This is in contrast to parliamentary regimes such as the United Kingdom and France’s own Third and Fourth Republics, where the government truly revolves around the legislative branch, but also in contrast with presidential regimes such as the United States, which are characterized by a more strict separation of powers.[8] France’s semipresidential system features a two-headed executive: a President of the Republic, who is directly elected and holds considerable power, and a Prime Minister, who is appointed by the President but is accountable to the Parliament.[9] Another term often used to describe the French constitutional arrangement is “rationalized parliamentarism.”[10] In any case, the drafters of the 1958 Constitution sought to preserve the generally parliamentarian character of France’s government, while at the same time limiting the Parliament’s power enough to avoid the chronic governmental instability of the Third and Fourth Republics.[11]

B. Parliament’s Place in the French Governance Structure: The Relationship and Overlap Between the Executive and Legislative Branches

The relationship between the legislature and the executive is perhaps more complex in France than in purely parliamentarian systems or presidential systems. The French Parliament does not enjoy the primacy that the British Parliament enjoys in the United Kingdom, and must engage with the executive as a separate branch of government. Yet at the same time, the branches of government are not as strictly separated in France as they are in the United States, for example. Both the French and the American systems of government rely on checks and balances, but whereas the American system is defined by separation of powers, the French constitutional arrangement rests on a structure of interconnecting powers. The main features of this structure of interconnecting powers are the following:

1. Impeachment

The office of President is largely shielded from both parliamentary and judicial interference. Indeed, the President may not be prosecuted while in office except by the International Criminal Court, nor can he be held liable for acts carried out in his official capacity or be compelled to testify before any court or administrative authority.[12] Furthermore, the Parliament may only impeach the President for “breach of his duties patently incompatible with his continuing office,”[13] something which has never occurred so far under the current Constitution.

2. Dissolution

The President may dissolve one of the two chambers of Parliament—the National Assembly (the Senate, however, cannot be dissolved).[14] Elections for a new National Assembly must occur no less than twenty days and no more than forty days following such a dissolution, and the President is barred from dissolving the National Assembly again for a year following these elections.[15] This prerogative was used twice by President Charles de Gaulle (in 1962 and 1968), twice by President François Mitterand (in 1981 and 1988), and once by President Jacques Chirac (in 1997).[16]

3. The Prime Minister and Votes of No Confidence

The office of the Prime Minister, and more broadly the cabinet of which he is the head (usually referred to as “the Government” in France[17]), is the main institution where the President’s and the Parliament’s powers meet and overlap. The Government is in charge of the day-to-day administration of government, and of carrying out the nation’s policies.[18] Furthermore, most of the President’s instruments of power (such as decrees) must be signed by the Prime Minister and by any other minister who might be involved in carrying out the measure in question.[19] Thus, the President cannot do much without the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister and all cabinet ministers serve at the President’s discretion.[20] It is the President who appoints and dismisses them, and he/she can legally choose whomever he/she wishes.[21] However, the Prime Minister needs the support of the Parliament. Not only is that support needed to pass legislation, but the National Assembly also has the power to force the Government’s resignation. This is done in one of two ways: either on the Prime Minister’s own initiative, or on the National Assembly’s initiative.

In the first scenario, the Prime Minister demands a vote of confidence after making a policy statement (either a detailed policy program or a more general statement).[22] Prime Ministers usually call for such votes of confidence as a way to test legislative support for their political program, and/or as a way to solidify support, by “forcing” allied legislators to either go on record as

supporting the Government or cause a political crisis. The Prime Minister and his/her Government must resign if they lose the vote, but will generally come out politically strengthened if they win.[23] Many Prime Ministers have demanded votes of confidence throughout the history of the Fifth Republic, and none has lost so far.[24]

In the second scenario, a group representing at least one-tenth of the members of the National Assembly can call for a vote of confidence in the Government.[25] The vote then takes place at least forty-eight hours after the resolution has been tabled, and only votes cast in favor of the no-confidence resolution are counted.[26] In order to prevent the abuse of such no-confidence resolutions, no member of the National Assembly may sign more than three during a single ordinary session, or more than one during a single extraordinary session.[27] This instrument has been widely used by opposition parties to express their disapproval of government policies, but it is in practice more symbolic than effective: out of the many no-confidence resolutions that have been considered since 1958, only one was successful, on October 9, 1962 (the resulting political crisis led then-President Charles de Gaulle to dissolve the National Assembly four days later).[28]

4. Shared Legislative Initiative

The authority to initiate legislation is shared between the Prime Minister (who is appointed by the President, as mentioned above) and the members of the Parliament.[29] The terminology changes a bit according to whether a bill is initiated by the Prime Minister (in which case the term used is projet de loi – "law project"), or by a member of the Parliament (the term then used is proposition de loi – "law proposal").[30]

5. The Absence of Presidential Veto Power

Contrary to the President of the United States, the French President does not have the power to veto legislation. He/she is required to promulgate Acts of Parliament within fifteen days of their final passage.[31] The most he/she can do is ask the Parliament to reopen the debate on the Act or any part thereof.[32]

C. Constitutional Powers and Areas of Responsibility

The Constitution states that the role of Parliament is to "pass statutes," "monitor the action of the Government," and "assess public policies."[33] The Parliament does not have the authority to legislate on anything it wishes, however. Indeed, the Constitution explicitly defines what can be the object of a statute. The areas that fall under the Parliament's legislative authority include the following:

> - civic rights and the fundamental guarantees granted to citizens for the exercise of their civil liberties; freedom, pluralism and the independence of the media; the obligations imposed for the purposes of national defense upon the person and property of citizens;
>
> - nationality, the status and capacity of persons, matrimonial property systems, inheritance and gifts;
>
> - the determination of serious crimes and other major offences and the penalties they carry; criminal procedure; amnesty; the setting up of new categories of courts and the status of members of the Judiciary;
>
> - the base, rates and methods of collection of all types of taxes; the issuing of currency.
>
> . . . .
>
> - the system for electing members of the Houses of Parliament, local assemblies and the representative bodies for French nationals living abroad, as well as the conditions for holding elective offices and positions for the members of the deliberative assemblies of the territorial communities;
>
> - the setting up of categories of public legal entities;
>
> - the fundamental guarantees granted to civil servants and members of the Armed Forces;
>
> - nationalisation of companies and the transfer of ownership of companies from the public to the private sector.
>
> Statutes shall also lay down the basic principles of :
>
> - the general organisation of national defence;
>
> - the self-government of territorial communities, their powers and revenue;
>
> - education;
>
> - the preservation of the environment;
>
> - systems of ownership, property rights and civil and commercial obligations;

- Employment law, Trade Union law and Social Security;

[- Appropriations][34]

In addition, the French Parliament is responsible for authorizing declarations of war,[35] and for authorizing the extension of a state of siege beyond twelve days (the Council of Ministers, presided over by the President, has the authority to decree a state of siege for those first twelve days).[36] The Constitution specifies that this list may be completed by an "institutional Act" (*Loi organique*).[37] However, any subject that is not enumerated as a legislative matter by the Constitution or an "institutional Act" is considered to be a matter for regulation by the executive, but not for legislation by the Parliament.[38]

The Parliament may also adopt resolutions on any topic, so long as the resolution cannot be considered as an injunction to the Government or a motion of no confidence in the Government.[39] These resolutions are seen as a means of expression for the Parliament and are not binding.[40]

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III. Structure and Composition

A. Structure

1. Overall Structure

France has a bicameral Parliament, composed of the National Assembly and the Senate.[41] The two houses both sit in Paris, but in separate places: the National Assembly at the Bourbon Palace (Palais Bourbon), and the Senate at the Luxembourg Palace (Palais du Luxembourg).[42]

The National Assembly has 577 members, called deputies (*députés*), and the Senate has 348 senators.[43]

2. The National Assembly

a. The President of the National Assembly

At the beginning of each legislative term, the National Assembly elects a President of the National Assembly.[44] The President of the National Assembly has important powers, and is ranked as the fourth most important figure in the French government hierarchy under the rules of protocol (the first three being the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, and the President of the Senate).[45]

In addition to presiding over the National Assembly's sessions, the President of the National Assembly has a crucial role in organizing the National Assembly's workload and agenda.[46] Furthermore, he/she appoints three of the nine nonpermanent judges on the Conseil constitutionnel (Constitutional Council, which verifies the constitutionality of French laws), as well as one or several members of various independent agencies such as the Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel (Superior Council on Audiovisual Media, France's main regulatory agency for electronic media), the governing council of the Banque de France (the French central bank), the Autorité des marchés financiers (Financial Markets Authority), and several others.[47] He/she also has the authority to ask the Conseil constitutionnel to evaluate the constitutionality of a bill before it becomes law (the only others who may do that are the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the President of the Senate, or a group of sixty deputies or sixty senators).[48]

b. The Bureau of the National Assembly

The President of the National Assembly is the head of the Bureau of the National Assembly, and the only member of that body to be elected for an entire legislative term.[49] The other members (six vice-presidents, three quaestors, and twelve secretaries) are elected at the beginning of each year. The National Assembly Rules call for the deputies to choose a bureau that is gender-balanced and that reflects the political composition of the National Assembly as a whole, thus ensuring that opposition parties are adequately represented.[50]

The Bureau is responsible for organizing the National Assembly's workload and agenda, and for managing the institution's day-to-day operations.[51]

c. Permanent Commissions

The National Assembly has eight permanent commissions: the Education and Cultural Commission; the Economic Commission; the Foreign Relations Commission; the Social Issues Commission; the National Defense and Armed Forces Commission; the Sustainable Development and Territorial Organization Commission; the Finance, General Economy, and Budgetary Control Commission; and the Commission for Constitutional Laws, Legislation, and the General Administration of the Republic.[52] Additionally, the National Assembly can also create temporary special commissions.[53] A deputy may not be a member of more than one commission at a time.[54]

The main role of these commissions is to prepare bills for full deliberation.[55] Indeed, the Constitution requires that bills be discussed by a commission before being debated and voted on by the full National Assembly.[56] Commissions have the power to amend a bill.[57] Furthermore, in addition to this crucial legislative role, the permanent commissions are supposed to monitor the actions of the government, and to act as the National Assembly's principal fact-finding bodies.[58]

d. Political Groups

Deputies may organize into political groups, although such groups must have at least fifteen members to be officially recognized.[59] These groups represent "the organized expression of the political parties and formations within the Assembly, and allow deputies to group themselves according to their affinities."[60] A deputy may only belong to one political group at a time.[61]

Currently, out of the 577 members of the National Assembly, 287 are affiliated with the Socialiste, républicain et citoyen (Socialist, Republican and Citizen, related to the Socialist Party) political group, 199 are affiliated with Les Républicains (The Republicans, named after the main center-right party that most of its members hail from), and twenty-nine are affiliated with the Union des démocrates et indépendants (Union of Democrats and Independents, related to the centrist political party of the same name) group. Fifty-one deputies are affiliated with one of three smaller political groups, and eleven deputies are unaffiliated.[62]

3. The Senate

The Senate is organized in a manner very similar to the National Assembly.

a. The President of the Senate

The President of the Senate is elected every three years, after each partial renewal of the Senate (see Part IV, "Elections," below).[63] He/she is in charge of ensuring the Senate's security and proper operation, and has a key role in organizing the institution's workload and agenda.[64] He/she appoints three of the nine nonpermanent judges on the Conseil constitutionnel and, as noted above, he/she is one of the few individuals with the authority to ask the Conseil constitutionnel to evaluate the constitutionality of a bill before it becomes law.[65]

Although he/she is third under the rules of protocol, the President of the Senate is actually next in the line of succession as Head of State in case of absence or incapacity of the President of the Republic.[66] If the President of the Republic is declared permanently absent or incapacitated by the Conseil constitutionnel, the President of the Senate takes on his/her role until new elections are held (at least twenty days, and no more than thirty-five days, after the declaration of vacancy or incapacity).[67] The only presidential prerogatives that the President of the Senate cannot exercise as interim Head of State are the ability to dissolve the National Assembly and the ability to call for a national referendum.[68]

b. The Bureau of the Senate, Commissions, and Political Groups

The Bureau of the Senate is composed of twenty-six members: the President of the Senate, eight vice-presidents, three quaestors, and fourteen secretaries.[69] A new Bureau is formed every three years, with the election of a new President of the Senate.[70] Senate Rules require that the Bureau reflect the political composition of the Senate.[71] Like its equivalent in the National Assembly, the Bureau of the Senate is responsible for organizing the institution's workload and agenda, and for managing day-to-day operations.[72]

The Senate has seven permanent commissions: the Economic Commission; the Foreign Relations, Defense, and Armed Forces Commission; the Social Issues Commission; the Culture, Education, and Communications Commission; the Territorial Organization and Sustainable Development Commission; the Finance Commission; and the Commission on Constitutional Laws, Legislation, Universal Suffrage, Rules, and General Administration.[73] The Senate also has a Commission on European Affairs to monitor the activities of European Union institutions, and can create special commissions and fact-finding commissions for specific issues.[74] The Senate's commissions have the same powers and responsibilities as their National Assembly equivalents.[75]

Senators can organize into political groups in the same manner as their National Assembly colleagues, except that the threshold number to be officially recognized as a group in the Senate is ten.[76] Currently, 144 senators are affiliated with the Groupe Les Républicains, 110 are affiliated with the Groupe socialiste et républicain, forty-two are affiliated with the Groupe Union des Démocrates et Independants, forty-six senators are affiliated with one of three smaller political groups, and six senators are unaffiliated.[77]

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IV. Elections

Deputies are elected by direct universal suffrage for terms of five years (unless the President ends a term prematurely by calling for early elections).[78] Senators, by contrast, are elected by indirect suffrage: they are considered the representatives of the local and regional communities (*communautés territoriales*) of France, and as such are elected by an electoral college of approximately 160,000 "great electors" (*grands electeurs*), 95% of whom are members of the municipal councils of France's

36,767 cities, towns, and villages.[79] Senators are elected for terms of six years, with elections for alternating halves of the Senate being held every three years.[80]

Deputies are elected to discrete, single-seat legislative districts.[81] The number of legislative districts in each *département* (the main administrative subdivision of French territory) varies according to census population. Thus, the number of deputies per département varies from one (in the more rural départements such as Creuse or Lozère) to twenty-one (in the Nord, France's most populous département).[82] Deputies are elected through a two-round voting system.[83]

Senators are distributed by département, with the number of senators per département varying from one for each of the more rural départements, to eleven for Nord and twelve for Paris.[84] Départements that have only one or two senators elect them via a two-round voting system, but those that have three or more senators elect them through a proportional representation system.[85]

Legislative districts are defined by law, as is the number of senators per département.[86] However, the Conseil constitutionnel has ruled that, under the principle of equality of suffrage, these questions must be defined according to neutral, "essentially demographic" criteria.[87] This constitutional rule therefore makes it impossible for any dominant party to engage in gerrymandering.

Contrary to the United States, French citizens residing abroad are represented in Parliament, by eleven deputies and twelve senators.[88]

Although deputies and senators are elected by discrete legislative districts or départements, they are not considered to be the representatives of their specific districts or départements. Rather, the constitutional mandate of every deputy and senator is to be a representative of the French Nation as a whole.[89]

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V. Legislative Process

The French legislative process has three basic phases: submission, discussion, and promulgation.[90]

A. Submission

A bill may be submitted by the Prime Minister, by a deputy or group of deputies, or by a senator or group of senators.[91] However, only the Prime Minister may submit a bill or an amendment which, if it were to be adopted, would cause either a reduction in public resources or an increase in spending.[92] In practice, the majority of bills are submitted by the Prime Minister. [93]

The Prime Minister, the President of the National Assembly, or the President of the Senate may block the submission of a bill that does not fall within the enumerated matters that, under the Constitution, may be the subject of legislation.[94] The Conseil constitutionnelis the arbiter of any disagreement between the Prime Minister and either chamber of Parliament on whether a bill falls within the proper ambit for legislation.[95]

Appropriations bills, and bills on the financing of social security, must be submitted to the National Assembly first, while bills regarding the territorial organization of France must be submitted to the Senate first.[96]

B. Discussion

Upon submission to either the National Assembly or the Senate, a bill is published and sent to either a permanent commission or a special commission, which studies it and prepares a report.[97] The commission may reject the bill, adopt it as is, or amend it—except for constitutional reforms, appropriations bills, and bills on the financing of social security, which may not be amended in commission.[98] If the bill is approved by the commission (either in its original draft or as amended), or if the commission fails to act on the bill, it is then discussed in a plenary session, where it may again be rejected, adopted as-is, or amended.[99] If the bill is adopted in plenary session, it is then sent to the other chamber of Parliament, where it follows the same basic procedure (discussion and vote in commission, and then in plenary session).[100]

A bill must be adopted in identical terms by both chambers of Parliament to become law.[101] If the two chambers of Parliament fail to adopt an identical bill after two rounds (or one round if the Prime Minister opted for an accelerated procedure and the Presidents of the National Assembly and of the Senate do not jointly deny the Prime Minister's motion), the bill may be sent to a joint commission made up of seven deputies and seven senators.[102] The joint commission is supposed to negotiate and elaborate a common draft for the parts of the bill that the two chambers disagree on. If a compromise is found, it is sent to both the National Assembly and the Senate for final votes, and no further amendment is possible without the Prime Minister's approval. [103] If the joint commission's compromise draft is again rejected by one of the two chambers of Parliament, the Prime Minister may, after a new reading and vote in each chamber, ask for the National Assembly to take a final vote either on the joint commission's final text, or on the last draft that the National Assembly voted on, as amended by the Senate.[104] If the joint commission fails to come to a compromise, the Prime Minister may, after a new reading and vote in each chamber, ask for the National Assembly to take a final vote on the last draft that the National Assembly voted on, as amended by the Senate.[105]

Since 1959, approximately 20% of bills have had to go to a joint commission, and the joint committees have been able to find compromises approximately 60% of the time.[106] Thus, while the National Assembly ends up having the last word in cases of extreme deadlock, such situations have historically been rare.

C. Promulgation

When a bill has been adopted by both chambers of Parliament, the President of the Republic has fifteen days to either promulgate it, or to ask the Parliament to reexamine it.[107] This second option has been very rarely used since 1958.[108] Furthermore, the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the President of either chamber of Parliament, or a group of sixty deputies or sixty senators, may ask the Conseil constitutionnel to review a bill's constitutionality before promulgation.[109] The Conseil constitutionnel normally has one month to review the bill, during which time the fifteen-day timeframe to promulgate the bill is temporarily suspended.[110]

The President of the Republic promulgates a new law by signing a promulgation decree, which certifies that the law has been adopted according to the proper constitutional procedure, and which authorizes its publication in the official gazette.[111] The new law then usually comes into force either on the date specified in the law if it contains an effective date provision, or on the day following its publication in the official gazette if the law is silent on that question.[112]

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[16] Louis Favoreu et al., Droit constitutionnel [Constitutional Law] 689 (2011).

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[19] *Id.* art. 19.

[20] *Id.* art. 8.

[21] David Marrani, Dynamics in the French Constitution 17 (2013).

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[23] Favoreu et al., *supra* note 16, at 768–69.

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[26] *Id*.

[27] *Id*.

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[30] Favoreu et al., *supra* note 16, at 836.

[31] Const. art. 10.

[32] *Id*.

[33] *Id.* art. 24.

[34] *Id.* art. 34.

[35] *Id.* art. 35.

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[53] *Id*.

[54] *Id*.

[55] *Id*.

[56] Const. arts. 42, 43.

[57] *Id.* art. 44.

[58] *Fiche de synthèse n°24: Les commissions permanentes*, *supra* note 52.

[59] Règlement de l'Assemblée nationale, *supra* note 50, art. 19.

[60] *Fiche de synthèse n°22: Les groupes politiques* [*Factsheet No. 22: The Political Groups*], Assemblee-nationale.fr (Apr. 16, 2014), http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/decouvrir-l-assemblee/role-et-pouvoirs-de-l-assemblee-nationale/les-organes-de-l-assemblee-nationale/les-groupes-politiques, *archived at* https://perma.cc/V63W-ZABH.

[61] *Id*.

[62] *Groupes Politiques* [*Political Groups*], Assemblee-nationale.fr, http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/tribun/xml/effectifs_groupes.asp (last visited Dec. 18, 2015), *archived at* https://perma.cc/ED3C-XT9A.

[63] *Organisation du Sénat* [*Organization of the Senate*], Senat.fr (website of the Senate), http://www.senat.fr/role/orga.html#c580673 (last visited Dec. 17, 2015), *archived at* https://perma.cc/LZR6-SR4T.

[64] *Id*.

[65] Const. arts. 56, 61.

[66] *Id*. art. 7.

[67] *Id*.

[68] *Id*.

[69] *Le Bureau du Sénat* [*The Bureau of the Senate*], Senat.fr, http://www.senat.fr/role/fiche/bur.html (last visited Dec. 17, 2015), *archived at* https://perma.cc/4PXC-FNRX.

[70] *Id*.

[71] *Id*.

[72] *Id*.

[73] *Id*.

[74] *Id*.

[75] *Les commissions permanentes* [*The Permanent Commissions*], Senat.fr, http://www.senat.fr/role/fiche/ comperm.html (last visited Dec. 17, 2015), *archived at* https://perma.cc/8UC5-BJ5P.

[76] *Organisation du Sénat*, *supra* note 63**.**

[77] *Groupes politiques* [*Political Groups*], Senat.fr (Dec. 14, 2015), http://www.senat.fr/grp, *archived at* https://perma.cc/JLW7-UFF5.

[78] *Fiche de synthèse n°1: Présentation synthétique des institutions françaises*, *supra* note 43.

[79] *Id.*; *Qu'est-ce qu'une commune?* [*What is a Municipality?*], Vie-publique.fr (Web portal of the French Administration) (Jan. 20, 2015), http://www.vie-publique.fr/decouverte-institutions/institutions/collectivites-territoriales/categories-collectivites-territoriales/qu-est-ce-qu-commune.html, *archived at* https://perma.cc/BH4B-PWPW; Sénat – L'essentiel [Senate – The Basics] 8 (July 2015), http://www.senat.fr/fileadmin/Fichiers/ Images/visite/Essentiel/Brochure2015-Essentiel-Octobre2015.pdf, *archived at* https://perma.cc/5B45-KWEX.

[80] *Fiche de synthèse n°1: Présentation synthétique des institutions françaises*, *supra* note 43.

[81] *Fiche de synthèse n°14: L'élection des députés* [*Factsheet No. 14: The Election of Deputies*], Assemblee-nationale.fr (Apr. 15, 2014), http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/decouvrir-l-assemblee/role-et-pouvoirs-de-l-assemblee-nationale/le-depute/l-election-des-deputes, *archived at* https://perma.cc/2KDZ-T8KT; Sénat – L'essentiel, *supra* note 79.

[82] *Fiche de synthèse n°14: L'élection des députés*, *supra* note 81; Ordonnance n° 2009-935 du 29 juillet 2009 portant répartition des sièges et délimitation des circonscriptions pour l'élection des députés [Ordinance No. 2009-935 of July 29, 2009, Establishing the Distribution of Seats and Boundaries of Voting Districts for the Elections of Deputies], Table No. 2, http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000020915491& categorieLien=id, *archived at* https://perma.cc/M46V-E2TS.

[83] *Fiche de synthèse n°14: L'élection des députés*, *supra* note 81.

[84] Sénat – L'essentiel, *supra* note 79, at 8–9.

[85] *Id*. at 8.

[86] Const. art. 25; *Fiche de synthèse n°14: L'élection des députés*, *supra* note 81.

[87] Conseil constitutionnel, Decision No. 86-208 DC, July 2, 1986, http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/les-decisions/acces-par-date/decisions-depuis-1959/1986/86-208-dc/decision-n-86-208-dc-du-2-juillet-1986.8273.html, *archived at* https://perma.cc/9J7C-9A37; Conseil constitutionnel, Decision No. 86-218 DC, Nov. 18, 1986, http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/les-decisions/acces-par-date/decisions-depuis-1959/1986/86-218-dc/decision-n-86-218-dc-du-18-novembre-1986.8291.html, *archived at* https://perma.cc/YM8C-A8JT; Favoreu et al., *supra* note 16, at 606.

[88] Const. art. 24; *La représentation des Français établis hors de France* [*Representation of French Citizens Residing Abroad*], Senat.fr (Dec. 16, 2015), http://www.senat.fr/role/fiche/franc_etrang.html, *archived at* https://perma.cc/XXB9-VYRG.

[89] Const. art. 27; Favoreu et al., *supra* note 16, at 744.

[90] *Fiche de synthèse n°32 : La procédure législative* [*Factsheet No. 32: The Legislative Procedure*], Assemblee-nationale.fr (Apr. 28, 2014), http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/decouvrir-l-assemblee/role-et-pouvoirs-de-l-assemblee-nationale/les-fonctions-de-l-assemblee-nationale/les-fonctions-legislatives/la-procedure-legislative, *archived at* https://perma.cc/CMX2-KQ4Z.

[91] *Id.*; Const. art. 38.

[92] Const. art. 40.

[93] *La procédure legislative* [*The Legislative Procedure*], Senat.fr, http://www.senat.fr/role/fiche/procedure_ leg.html (last visited Dec. 18, 2015), *archived at* https://perma.cc/49G2-ETRF.

[94] Const. art. 41.

[95] *Id*.

[96] *Id.* art. 39.

[97] *Fiche de synthèse n°32: La procédure législative*, *supra* note 90.

[98] *Id.*; Const. arts. 42, 43.

[99] Const. art. 42.

[100] *Fiche de synthèse n°32 : La procédure législative*, *supra* note 90; *La procédure législative*, *supra* note 93.

[101] Const. art. 45.

[102] *Id*.; *La procédure législative*, *supra* note 93.

[103] *La procédure législative*, *supra* note 93; Favoreu et al., *supra* note 16, at 851.

[104] *La procédure législative*, *supra* note 93; Favoreu et al., *supra* note 16, at 852.

[105] *La procédure législative*, *supra* note 93; Favoreu et al., *supra* note 16, at 852.

[106] Favoreu et al., *supra* note 16, at 851.

[107] Const. art. 10

[108] *La procédure législative*, *supra* note 93.

[109] Const. art. 61.

[110] *Id*.

[111] Favoreu et al., *supra* note 16, at 855.

[112] Code civil [Civil Code] art. 1, http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCodeArticle.do;jsessionid=EB8F1DB670794AE5C00FD872E7A105D3.tpdila18v_2?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006070721&idArticle=LEGIARTI000006419280&dateTexte=20151218&categorieLien=id#LEGIARTI000006419280, *archived at* https://perma.cc/E85S-WVD6.

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